

# Utah Emergency Management Administration Council

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## Utah State Capitol Capitol Board Room *November 1, 2023* **10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.** Meeting Minutes

### In attendance:

Commissioner Jess Anderson	Lt. Gov Deidre Hendricksen
Kris Hamlet, DEM	Carlos Braceras, UDOT
Kim Shelly, DEQ	Alan Fuller, DTS
Tyson Walker, DHHS	Michelle Hale, DHHS
Greg Paras, DWS	Joel Ferry, DNR
Will Lusk, Cache County	Captain Tanner Jensen, SIAC (guest)
Kathryn McMullin, Summit County	Dustin Lewis, South Jordan City
Colonel Erik Weidmeier, UTNG	Thayne Mickelson, Dept of Ag & Food
David Moores-Putzer, AG's Office/DPS Legal	Annette Newman, Utah Hospital Association
Jeff King, Jordan Valley Water	Pat Malan, VOAD President
Judy Watanabe, DEM	Kim Hammer, DEM
Kris Repp, DEM	Angelia Crowther, DEM

### • Welcome, Introduction, & Opening Remarks

Lt. Governor Deidre M. Henderson  
DPS Commissioner Jess L. Anderson

The Commissioner welcomed everyone. Lt. Governor also welcomed the group and is looking forward to the updates.

### • Approval of Minutes - June 23, 2023 Meeting

Council

Motion to approval the minutes - Jeff King, JVWD, second by Allan Fuller, DTS. Approved by all.

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## • Presentations:

### ➤ Weather [Outlook](#)

Glen Merrill, NOAA/NWS Senior Hydrologist

- It has been a beautiful summer and fall, this is due to the record breaking winter we had last year
- Below normal temperatures this year
- Increased snowpack during the winter
- Less than 10% of the state is in a moderate drought status (drought free)
- 90%- 95% of water from snowpack
- Chances of snowpack similar to last year is about 1%
- Enzo cycle - El Nino/La Nina. We are currently in an El Nino episode expected to persist through winter months, into March/April
  - El Nino - sea surface temperatures warmer than normal. increased thunderstorm activity. Changes global circulation of the jet stream. The jet stream is the main conveyor belt for storm systems that move globally in the northern hemisphere. This causes cooler and wetter weather this includes the desert southwest.
- Depending on how El Nino progresses will determine whether or not we'll have increased precipitation.
- More than half of the El Nino's have higher precipitation than normal over the past few years
- There is not a significant trend with El Nino years
- 33% chance that anything can happen
- Probabilities are leaning towards higher precipitation than normal
- Above normal precipitation the second half of the winter
- Dry through the holidays, more active period after that
- No drought degradation through January

Kim Shelley asked if we are anticipating possibly warmer temperatures and higher precipitation, does that mean that it will be in the form of rain? Glenn indicated that the outlook is for a three month period, so it's hard to differentiate snow and rain levels at higher elevations. Kathryn McMullin asked if with the 2023 snowpack runoff being so high, what will it look like for 2024? Glenn said that if our snowpack/runoff is similar to last year, a lot of water would need to be moved. There is only a 1% chance that we'll have a year similar to last year.

### ➤ Water Year in Review and [Outlook](#)

Laura Haskell, DNR, Water Resources, Engineer

- October 2022 vs October of 2023 - Snow water equivalent
  - 2023 new record 216% of normal; 30 inches of water in the snowpack
    - Adding in rain and hail, we were at 136% of normal
    - Soil moisture in mid May 2023 set new record, 42% saturated at the end of the 2023 water year
    - October of this year is normal, hoping to see more storms to increase moisture so that it will freeze prior to snowpack
    - The water year follows the water cycle. Starts on October 1st, ends September 30th.
    - Peak saturation set new record of 83% in 2023
    - Ended 2023 at 114% of normal
    - Price/SanRafael is the lowest at 89%, which is not bad
    - Streamflow measured from April through July was well above normal in all major basins
    - Streamflow was above average as well. This helps to keep reservoirs full
    - in 2022 almost half of the state's streams were running below normal

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- 2023 many reservoirs above 80%. A 31% improvement in one year
- Looking at the Great Salt Lake, it has increased some
  - 2021 - 2022 followed the same pattern, dropping a couple of feet
  - 2023 started out the same, but later in the year, the levels increased
  - The northern and southern arms have different levels
  - The north arm didn't have the same levels of increase due to salinity and the berm
- If anyone has any questions, more information can be found at: [drought.utah.gov](http://drought.utah.gov)

## ➤ Fiber Optic Outage in Cache County

Will Lusk, Cache County Emergency Manager

- Will Lusk discussed a fiber optic outage that occurred in Cache County earlier this year. Will distributed a handout outlining the three day outage.
- The outage occurred on August 21st, lasting for three days, causing communications/internet outages. The school district was trying to register students, and businesses were impacted. Telephone and internet lines were impacted as well as hospitals and law enforcement agencies.
  - Lessons learned:
  - Fiber optics play an important role in our day to day lives
  - There are no regulations or requirements related to coordinate with or notify public safety entities during an incident where a fiber optic line is damaged or cut
  - Loss of the ability for citizens to call 9-1-1
  - Ability of dispatch centers to monitor communications other than telephone (landline)
  - Much of today's technology rely on fiber optic cables
  - Challenge to determine the location of the problem and assess the level of impact to the community - local outage maps or service provider maps are needed
  - No one service provider or agency speaks for, or coordinates for the telecommunications industry or for each industry sector as a whole. We must sort through multiple providers at the local level even for a single incident
  - PSAP/Dispatch centers need to have redundant communications for receiving and sending technologies and be able to monitor or use these methods on an emergency basis.
  - Ongoing need to teach citizens what types of back-up communication methods are available and which methods public safety will use when a telecommunications disaster strikes.
- The cable that was damaged was critical to communications in Cache County; similar to having I-15 shut down for a long period of time. Thankfully there weren't a lot of 911 calls during the outage.
- Reverted to Y2K plans and use of HAM radio to augment communication capabilities. Will is working to determine what is available for redundant communications and how to best inform the public.

Commissioner Anderson thanked Will for his presentation. He asked the group to think about this issue. Has anyone put plans in place to address this issue? Kathryn McMullin indicated that Summit County has considered this issue in their Emergency Operations Center/ Business Emergency Operations Center. She would recommend that cities and counties reach out to our Protective Security Advisor (PSA) for Utah - Matt Beaudry. They are able to conduct risk assessments for state and local government entities. Better established communications capabilities for emergency operations centers, dispatch centers, etc.

Question - Will mentioned the use of HAM/Amateur radio - could he elaborate on that? One of the methods put in place for Y2K in Cache County was the use of HAM/Radio operators at critical

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facilities. Unfortunately the law enforcement dispatch centers don't routinely monitor the HAM radio traffic. Cache County has a strong volunteer radio group. They are used in emergency situations to assist critical facilities. During the outage the volunteer HAM radio operators were brought into schools, fire stations & police stations to provide communications support. Citizens could have driven outside the outage area (about 20 minutes) where they could access cell phone service (outside the impacted area). Will also mentioned satellite phone capabilities such as StarLink. Their dispatch center is now looking at those capabilities.

Lt. Gov mentioned item #1 on Will's handout that there is no requirement for telecommunications companies to notify public safety entities when there is an outage or disruption. Is this a systemic problem that needs to be addressed in a more formal way by our telecommunications providers? Will indicated that the primary task of communications professionals is to get/keep services operational as soon as possible after an outage. The industry may not understand how their services impact the entire community. They may not see the need to notify their customers and public safety entities. Once the damage is identified, they should coordinate with local city/county government agencies to discuss the time frame and help make the public aware. Lt. Governor Henderson asked if the county has had these conversations with the providers, or is this something that we need to take a more holistic statewide approach from the state? Will indicated that it should be a combination of efforts. Through Local Emergency Planning Committees and other groups, planning can take place for these types of incidents. Communications providers are not typically involved in the LEPC. This could also be something that needs to be discussed. Colonel Erik Weidemeir said that the UTNG has multiple communications capabilities to assist in these situations. They have also found that it is important for us as customers to reach out to the providers and voice their concerns.

Commissioner Anderson asked if there would be a need for this group to put a working group together to address these issues, under the direction of DEM?

Lt. Governor Henderson suggested that the group involve telecommunications providers, and a few key people from this group to look further into this topic.

Annette Newman feels that this is a concern and could be a life safety issue. She asked if the construction company that was doing the digging in Cache County knew who to contact if the fiber lines were damaged. Jeff King said that damage to fiber lines is different from water lines, power lines or gas lines. When there is an outage, it is quickly identified by the provider. In a fiber outage the provider needs to be notified by customers.

Lt. Governor Henderson feels that it would be important to get the fiber providers together to identify what the capabilities are and what they can and can't do if they are not notified by customers.

Commissioner Anderson asked if someone would like to make a motion to create a working group? Lt. Governor Henderson made a motion to create a Telecommunications Work Group; second by Colonel Wiedmeier, approved by all. The Division of Emergency Management will oversee this group.

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➤ [Utah Seismic Safety Commission \(USSC\)](#)

Robert Grow, Chair of USSC, Vice Chair Jessica Chappel,

Chief Bowman, USGS

- The Commission has been very active - since 1994. It is currently up for renewal
- The year the Commission was created was the same year as the Northridge earthquake in California

Statutory mission:

- Review earthquake related hazards and risks to the state of Utah
- Prepare recommendations to identify and mitigate these hazards
- Act as a source of information for individuals and groups concerned with earthquake safety
- Prepare a strategic seismic planning document update
- Update the document and monitor progress

The commission has recently updated the “Putting Down Roots in Earthquake Country” booklet for families. It is available on the website.

Also completed with FEMA and the state, to update the Wasatch Front Reinforced Masonry Risk Reduction Strategy. The need for this document became all the more apparent after the 2020 Magna earthquake.

Last year they issued the Utah K-12 Public Schools Inventory - that sets the stage for some of the recommendations they have been making to the Governor’s Office and the legislature.

New report and recommendations (handout) was distributed to the group

- Update on Priorities and Recommendations

There is about a one percent, per year chance of Utah having “the big one” (earthquake)

The Salt Lake Temple is undergoing a massive seismic upgrade

What would happen if the “big one” occurred?

- 3000 fatalities
- 7,500 - 10,000 critically wounded
- 1,500,000 without power
- 1,500,000 without water (not the same as the homes without power)
- 90,000 displaced households (households destroyed)
- FEMA considers this (earthquakes) to be the most significant hazard in the United States in the terms of a major disaster

Recommendations

- Continue to fix the aqueducts that bring 80% of the water into the Wasatch Front. They run across fault lines.
- Move forward with the inventory of the schools. Provide \$4 million in funding to conduct studies in schools to determine if they need to be retrofitted or rebuilt
  - \$20,000 for each elementary school
  - \$30,000 for each middle high school
  - \$40,000 for each high school
- There are 125 schools with 70,000 students that are major risk in an earthquake
- Start a public campaign at a low level. FEMA has given \$300,000 to Envision Utah to start a campaign regarding Unreinforced Masonry (URM) building in the state. They would like to

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continue the campaign for two more years (at a rate of \$300,000 per year), to help educate Utah's about URM risks when purchasing a home. Lt. Governor Henderson asked if the new schools that are being built, are being built to recommended standards? Jessica Chappel indicated that new construction is built to the new code standards. Lt. Governor Henderson asked how old are the schools that are at risk? Jessica indicated that schools that were constructed as new as those built in the 1960's are URM. Most brick buildings constructed before 1955 are URM.

- Utah currently has 140,000 URM building still in existence, many of them are single family homes
- Next recommendation is to keep buildings standing; this is not about increasing the building code standards, but would require police stations, fire stations, schools and hospitals to have their plans reviewed, along with buildings over 200,000 square feet. Plans would need to be reviewed by a structural engineer who is trained in seismic standards.
- Last year the legislature funded \$150,000 to study an earthquake early warning system. The system would provide a 15 second warning to people in Sandy, if the earthquake happened in Brigham City; Utah County would get a 25 second warning, etc. It would cost \$5 million in capital cost and \$1 million per year. It would be done in partnership with USGS and USSC.
- A public relations campaign would help to keep everyone informed
  - Will Lusk asked about regulations regarding building new homes? USGS maps out risks in certain areas. Jessica Chappel said that we (Utah) are current with existing requirements. A structural plan review is almost unheard of for a residence. Robert said that they are currently only asking that critical infrastructure/essential buildings require plan review.
  - Lt. Governor Henderson asked about earthquake insurance. When we were having flood insurance earlier this year, homeowners needed to purchase flood insurance 30 days in advance. Robert said that earthquake insurance can be hard to get if there have been recent earthquakes. He has earthquake insurance on his house and it's not that expensive.
- Robert provided an overview of the impacts a large magnitude earthquake could have in different parts of the state. He discussed the impacts to downtown Salt Lake

## ➤ Fentanyl Pandemic

Bill Newell, Statewide Information & Analysis Center (SIAC)

- SIAC Utah Drug Monitoring Initiative
- SIAC Utah Drug Monitoring Initiative (DMI) - see presentation
- Concerned about what they are seeing on the drug task force
- First fentanyl report issued by a state to outline fentanyl problems/data (2021)
- Provide quarterly bulletins and annual report
- Currently in the fourth wave of the opioid crisis in America
  - Started in early 2000's
  - Wave 2 in 2010

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- Wave 3 in 2013
  - Wave 4 in 2015
- Recent data from the state medical examiners office - key partner
  - 2000 - 1% of overdose deaths in Utah
  - 2018 - 8 %
  - 2022 - 33%
  - 2023 data is not in yet. Bill feels that we are currently in a plateau

2023 fentanyl incidents increased by over five times in the last year

- 88% of samples collected are counterfeit
- Methamphetamine and fentanyl are tied for the most common substance submitted for testing to the state lab in 2023.
  - Lt. Governor Henderson asked if this is a growing problem or if they are just getting better at identifying fentanyl. Bill indicated that it is due to the amount of drugs that are in the drug market in Utah. The state lab receives submissions from local, county and federal agencies.
  - 2023 - Heroin has dropped to #3 (submitted to the state forensics lab for identification)
  - Fentanyl is assumed to be in many other drugs
  - Fentanyl and methamphetamine are 100% manmade
  - 2 mg of fentanyl can kill a healthy, non-tolerant adult
  - Carfentanil - being seen in the east. It was first seen in the northeast. It is 100% more potent than fentanyl
    - A powerful synthetic opioid 50-100 times stronger than morphine
    - A Schedule II controlled substance
    - Developed originally for pain management in treatment of cancer patients
    - Also used as an anesthetic during surgeries
  - Fentanyl seized:
    - 2022 - 1,485,355 pills
    - Last week UHP seized 24,000 pills (two different seizures)
    - DEA national lab testing:
      - 2021 – 4/10 Fentanyl pills tested lethal
      - 2022 – 6/10 Fentanyl pills tested lethal
      - 2023 – 7/10 Fentanyl pills tested lethal
- Fentanyl is being smuggled in, through airports, in smaller candy boxes - whoppers, skittles, nerds etc
- SIAC tracks fentanyl prices. Prices have dropped drastically from 2018 until now
- Drug trafficking routes are controlled by cartels
- Cartels are producing about one million pills a day
- Why is Utah so important with regard to trafficking? DPS has one of the best interdiction teams in the country. There are 33 High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) regions in the country. Utah is the crossroads in the drug trafficking routes.
- Emerging Threats:



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- Xylazine - known as “Tranq” on the street, due to being a large animal tranquilizer. Prolongs the effects of fentanyl but has severe side effects, including necrosis. Naloxone may have limited effect but should still be administered.
- 2019 - less than 1% Xylazine - currently 7.7% w/powder (much more dangerous to first responders); seeing increased amounts of powder.
  - 27% of powder submitted for testing has Xylazine in it
- Because Xylazine is not an opioid, naloxone is not 100% effective
- Health Departments in Davis & Weber County are putting together a Tabletop Exercise scheduled for early next year to discuss these issues.
  - Will Lusk - Noticed that emergency managers are not included on the list of participants for the tabletop exercise and asked if they could be included in the TTX? Bill indicated the Davis County Health Department is hosting the exercise. He will provide them with Will’s information.

## • Roundtable Discussion

Council

- Committee Updates
- Future Topics

## • Action Items / Initiatives

Council

- Membership Updates

## • Closing Remarks and Adjournment

Lt. Governor Deidre M. Henderson  
DPS Commissioner Jess L. Anderson

Lt. Governor Henderson thanked everyone for their participation today. She has asked Commissioner Anderson if it would be beneficial to have more frequent meetings, to address many of these important issues. She suggested that we meet prior to the start of the legislative session next January. A meeting invite will be sent out to the group.

Commissioner Anderson also thanked everyone for their participation and for the presentations that were provided today. The roundtable Discussion and Action Items topics were tabled until the next meeting.

Motion to adjourn approved by all.

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